1:Opler E-5 (1931-1937)1941
(ca. 1870) NT8 Eastern Apache NT8
Chiricahua

LOCATION AND HISTORICAL SKETCH

THIS volume describes the culture of an Apachean-speaking tribe of the American Southwest as it existed during the youth of the older informants from whom data were collected. The Chiricahua were already horsemen and possessed their first firearms, but tribal life had not yet been disrupted by hostilities with the Americans.

The territory which they controlled during this period was extensive and is not easy to define accurately. They ranged through southwestern New Mexico, southeastern Arizona, and the northern parts of the Mexican states of Sonora and Chihuahua. The Rio Grande acted as the eastern boundary. Occasional journeys and raids brought them as far north as the pueblo outposts of Laguna, Acoma, and Zuñi, but ordinarily they did not stray much farther north than the present site of Quemado, New Mexico. The western limits of their country can be roughly indicated, from north to south, by the present towns of Spur Lake, Luna, Reserve, and Glenwood in New Mexico, and by Duncan, Wilcox, Johnson, Benson, Elgin, and Parker Canyon in Arizona. To the south an undetermined area in northern Mexico was also under their control.

The Chiricahua bands were three in number. The most eastern and northern band, whose territories joined those of the Mescalero Apache at the Rio Grande, controlled almost all the Chiricahua territory west of the Rio Grande in New Mexico and has been given a number of names throughout the literature. Those occurring most frequently are Warm Springs or Ojo Caliente Apache, Coppermine Apache, Mimbreños Apache, and Mogollones Apache. The Chiricahua name for this band is *čtθénè*, "Red Paint People." In historic times this band has been led by Mangus Colorado, Victorio, Nana, and Loco. From historical records and the accounts of informants, the local groups and camp sites of the members of this band can be traced to the

1:Opler E-5 (1931-1937)1941
(ca. 1870) NT8 Eastern Apache NT8
Chiricahua

175 Datil Range, the vicinity of Rito, Hot Springs, Cuchillo, and
619 the Black, the Mimbres, the Mogollon, the Pinos Altos, Vic-
[62] toria, and Florida mountain ranges. For convenience I have
[13] called the Red Paint People the Eastern Chiricahua band.
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619 To the south and west of the Red Paint People, ranging
101 through the portion of southwestern New Mexico west of the
Continental Divide and through southeastern Arizona, a second
[131] Chiricahua band, called *čokánen*, whose name does not yield to
linguistic analysis, was to be found. This is the band to which
the term "Chiricahua" was first applied. It was this band, often
[622] called in the literature "Cochise" Apache after their leader,
Cochise, which held Apache Pass, and with which the govern-
ment had a great deal of trouble during the Indian Wars. The
[131] most famous of the strongholds of this band, which I have named
the Central Chiricahua band, were the Dragoon Mountains, the
Chiricahua Mountains, and the Dos Cabezas Mountains.

The third and southernmost band of the Chiricahua, called in the native tongue, *ndé'i-ndá-i*, "Enemy People," stayed almost entirely in what is now Old Mexico. I shall refer to this group as the Southern Chiricahua band. During the last half of the
[648] nineteenth century difficulties with the Mexican soldiery drove them north, where they speedily came into conflict with settlers
[622] and United States government forces. After that they were harried from either side of the border until Geronimo's surrender in 1886. Geronimo himself was born a member of this band. Mention of this tribal subdivision in the literature is made under the names of Southern Chiricahua and Pinery Apache. Reference in the literature may be found to their leader, Hǫ́ whose name has been variously written as Who, Whoa, or Juh. The
[131] Sierra Madre and the Hatchet Mountains were familiar landmarks of this band.

175 With the appearance in numbers of white settlers, the affairs
648 of the tribe took an unhappy turn. About 1870 the Ojo Caliente
657 Reserve in western New Mexico was established for the Eastern Chiricahua band. In 1872 similar provision was made for the Central Chiricahua and the Southern Chiricahua. Because part of their range lay in Old Mexico, it was particularly difficult to

[Text continues on p. 4]

1:Opler E-5 (1931-1937)1941
(ca. 1870) NT8 Eastern Apache NT8
Chiricahua

[P 3]

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Approximate location of Chiricahua Bands in aboriginal times, showing portions of southeastern Arizona, southwestern New Mexico, and northern Mexico. Principal mountain ranges, modern settlements, and present major political boundaries are also indicated.
EASTERN BAND
CENTRAL BAND
SOUTHERN BAND
Mexico
Sonora
Chihuahua

FIG. 1.—Map showing approximate location of Chiricahua bands in aboriginal times

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Chiricahua

175 control the movements of the members of the latter group.
648 When the local reservations which had permitted these people
657 to remain in their familiar territories were abolished after 1875 in order to concentrate all Chiricahua on the White Mountain Apache Reservation, the stage was set for trouble. The antagonism between the Western Apache and the Chiricahua was marked, and many Chiricahua refused to obey the order to move. Others who were forced to go would leave their new home as soon as military supervision was relaxed. Out of this situation grew a number of bloody incidents and two major military operations—one when General Crook, in his campaign of 1883, was forced to cross over into Old Mexico in order to obtain the surrender of these Indians, and the last in 1885–86, ending on September 5, 1886, when Geronimo surrendered to General Nelson A. Miles.[1] During this period of strife the tribe, normally over one thousand strong, was reduced to less than half that number.

The aftermath of this struggle was the removal of the entire Chiricahua tribe, over four hundred individuals, from the West. They went, as prisoners, first to Florida and then, after a short stay, to Alabama, where they were held until 1894. In that year they were sent to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, where they were retained until their release from the status of prisoners of war.
175 This occurred in 1913, when individuals were given their choice
• 131 of taking up residence on the Mescalero Indian Reservation of
648 New Mexico or of accepting allotments of land in Oklahoma.
657 Less than one hundred chose to stay where they were. The survivors of this group and their descendants are still living in the vicinity of Apache, Oklahoma. Most of the Chiricahua, however, went to New Mexico and now live at Mescalero on a reservation which they share with the Mescalero and Lipan Apache.

[1] For a longer account of these troubles, from the native point of view, see Opler, "A Chiricahua Apache's Account of the Geronimo Campaign of 1886," *New Mexico Historical Review*, October, 1938.

2: Castetter and Opler N, E-5 (1931-1934)1936
NT8 Eastern Apache NT8
CHIRICAHUA
MESCALERO

Western Apache (Northern Tonto, Southern Tonto, White Mountain or Coyotero, Cibecue, and San Carlos Apache), and the Navaho. The dialects of the Chiricahua and Mescalero are usually close—closer, in all probability, than the dialects of any two other Southern Athabaskan tribes. 197

Ethnic ties point in the same direction. With due allowance for individual tribal variations and the influence of adjoining culture areas, there emerges a basic core of mythology, belief, and social organization common and peculiar to these Southern Athabaskans. In this respect the Mescalero and Chiricahua are again found to be most closely associated. In fact, the evidence of language, custom, and geographical location strongly suggests that these two tribes represent a late differentiation of a parent stock. 184 619 10

LOCATION

The land which the Mescalero claim was theirs in aboriginal times lay principally in what is now New Mexico. The eastern limit of their recognized territory was the flat country to the east of Hondo, but expeditions for salt, or to hunt antelope and buffalo often took them far beyond this point and many times east of the Pecos. Occasionally they wandered as far north as Santa Fe. On the south their range extended into northwestern Texas and into northern Chihuahua and Coahuila, Old Mexico. The Rio Grande was their western boundary. The favorite Mescalero haunts were to be found in the San Andreas, Sacramento, and Guadalupe mountain ranges. Places within this central mountainous area are the ones most frequently mentioned in the old stories, and from this section hunting expeditions and raiding and war parties would start out for the more remote parts of Mescalero territory. 131 [224 721]

The Chiricahua ranged through western New Mexico, southeastern Arizona, and southward into Old Mexico. Their eastern boundary began at the Rio Grande. They ranged westward approximately to the eastern boundaries of the present White Mountain and San Carlos Indian reser-

2: Castetter and Opler N, E-5 (1931-1934)1936
NT8 Eastern Apache NT8
CHIRICAHUA
MESCALERO

131 vations. The territory they claimed reached the Pueblo district of Laguna and Acoma to the north, and on the south their lands extended into Chihuahua and Sonora, Old Mexico.

BAND AND LOCAL GROUP

619 The Mescalero were divided into two bands. One was called "Edge of the Mountains People." The members of this band stayed most often in the vicinity of the Sacramento and Sierra Blanca mountain ranges. The second band [621] stayed farther to the east and the smaller offshoots of it, which we may term local groups, often camped on the flats in times of peace and so gave the name of "Plains People" [622] to the band. These two Mescalero bands were one in language and customs and, though each had separate leaders, recognized themselves as a single people.

619 The Chiricahua bands were three in number. The 101 eastern band, whose territories joined those of the Mescalero at the Rio Grande, controlled the territory of southwestern [131] New Mexico and has been given a variety of names throughout the literature. Those occurring most frequently are Warm Springs or Ojo Caliente Apache, Coppermine Apache, Mimbreños, and Mogollones Apache. The native name for this band is *tcihene*, which probably means "Red Paint [622] People." In historic times this band was led by the well-known chieftain, Victorio.

To the south and west of the "Red Paint People," ranging through a portion of southwestern New Mexico and through southeastern Arizona, a second Chiricahua band, the *tcokanene*, was to be found. The derivation of the native [622] term is uncertain. It was this band, often called in the [648] literature Cochise Apaches after their leader, Cochise, which controlled Apache Pass and with which the government had a great deal of trouble during the Indian wars. It was this band, too, which was instrumental in giving the name Chiracahua to the whole tribe. One local division or local group of [621] this band had as its main refuge the rocky indentations along [131] a mountain range called by the Apache *tseyata*, "Rock Pocket."

2: Castetter and Opler N, E-5 (1931-1934)1936
NT8 Eastern Apache NT8
CHIRICAHUA
MESCALERO

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Pocket." They were, therefore, called "Rock Pocket People." The Spanish name for this mountain range is the Chiricahua Mountains. At first the name Chiricahua was applied only to the Indians ranging in the vicinity of these mountains. When hostilities began, however, and the three bands were considered a common enemy, the name was used indiscriminately of all the hostiles. The name is now so well known and established that it has been thought best to retain it for the entire tribe.

The third and southernmost band of the Chiricahua was called "Enemy People." They stayed almost entirely in what is now Old Mexico; their territory embraced parts of northern Sonora and Chihuahua. Geronimo, whose name figures so largely in the accounts of the Indian wars of the Southwest, was born a member of this band. [131] [622]

It must not be thought that all the members of one band lived together or in close proximity. These bands were further divided into smaller units. Each, under the guidance of a man of some importance, chose as its base some natural fortification or landmark, was known by the name of that place, and, therefore, can be spoken of as a local group. Thus a group of Apaches of the *tcihene* or Warm Springs band consistently camped near a mountain called "Nokane Mountain." This group became known as the "Nokane Mountain People." 621 [619] [101] [103]

The nucleus of the local group was a body of relatives, the relatives of the leader. Friends who had faith in the leader's sagacity might also attach themselves to his following, new male members entered through marriage with women of the group, and in last analysis membership in the local group was determined by residence. Despite their importance, these local groups were fluid and unstable bodies. Loss of faith in the leader, death of a leader at a time when no other member could command the respect of the following, misfortune or widespread illness during residence at the favorite site, could all prove instrumental in the breaking up of the local group and the scattering of its membership. 621 596

2: Castetter and Opler N, E-5 (1931-1934)1936
NT8 Eastern Apache NT8
CHIRICAHUA
MESCALERO

133 leys are traversed by the Pecos and Rio Grande rivers and in the region between these rivers are other valleys entirely enclosed by higher ground with, therefore, no draining outlets. The Tularosa Basin is one such enclosed area *(14:*11). It has a maximum length of about 150 miles and a maximum width of about sixty miles. The interior of the basin contains an extensive area of alkali flats and white gypsum sands about four thousand feet above sea level, to the south of which lies a large sandy desert with slight relief and lack of definite drainage. The northern half of the basin includes, between the mountain borders, a plain that descends gradually from the Mesa Jumanes, six thousand to seven thousand feet above sea level, to the alkali flats, but is broken by many hills, buttes, and ridges, and by a ribbon of extremely rough lava that extends along its central axis for more than forty miles (*14:*12). The altitude of the Mescalero Indian Reservation Agency is 6,627 feet *(7:*7.).

132 The climate of the basin is typical of the arid Southwest,
133 marked usually by a clear sky, dry rare atmosphere, warm days and cool nights, both in summer and winter. The aver-
[137] age annual rainfall of the lowland plains is about ten inches and thus supports a vegetation of characteristic desert appearance. The high mountains at the borders of the basin receive more precipitation, are covered with forests, and give rise to several small streams which flow into the basin. Owing chiefly to fluctuations in altitude the basin has a wide range of temperature.

133 As has already been mentioned, the favorite haunts of
• [131] the Mescalero were in the San Andreas, Sacramento, and Guadalupe mountains. The San Andreas extend in a general north-south direction, and for a distance of eighty miles comprise the west wall of the Tularosa Basin, reaching a height of 9,040 feet in Salinas Peak. The range is remarkably continuous and unbroken, having only two principal notches and terminating at the south with San Agustin Peak, which is less than seven thousand feet above sea level (*14:*30).

2: Castetter and Opler N, E-5 (1931-1934)1936
NT8 Eastern Apache NT8
CHIRICAHUA
MESCALERO

The Sacramento Mountains, lying east of the southern part of the Tularosa Basin, form about fifty miles of its mountain wall and consist essentially of a great plateau rising in places to a height of more than nine thousand feet, descending gently eastward toward the Pecos Valley. On the west, however, it breaks off abruptly. The canyons are steep and short. Because the crest of the mountain is near the west side of the range, most of the drainage is eastward toward the Pecos River; only a narrow belt of the area sends its waters toward the west *(14:*26).

The dominant vegetation of these first two mountain ranges, utilized by the Mescalero Apache, is piñon pine, one-seeded juniper, and western yellow pine. In the third range mentioned, the Guadalupe Mountains, are to be found the important mescal and sotol in abundance. On Meinzer and Hare's *(14:*194) map showing zones of native vegetation, in a portion of the Tularosa Basin, mesquite is a dominant plant, and it will be seen later that both the mesquite and yucca of this basin constituted important sources of food for these Indians.

Sulphur Spring Valley, together with the rest of that part of Arizona which lies south of the Gila, was purchased from Mexico in 1853 and until about 1873 was occupied exclusively by the Chiricahua Apache. The trough occupied by Sulphur Spring and Arivaipa Valleys is bordered by two parallel mountain chains which extend from the Gila River to Mexico. Included in the east chain are the Chiricahua Mountains, the largest in the region, which formerly constituted a favorite dwelling place of the Chiricahua Apache. In fact, the name Chiricahua was at first applied only to the Indians ranging in the vicinity of these mountains. These mountains extend southward from Apache Pass about thirty miles to the head of the San Bernadino drainage, twenty miles north of the Mexican boundary. The range is massive and in the northern portion rugged, although to the south, where it is wider and more massive, the crest line is remarkably even and a considerable portion of it more than nine thousand feet above sea